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13 Nov. 1946

MEMORANDUM TO: Chief, Interdepartmental Coordinating
and Planning Staff

SUBJECT: Processing of Foreign Broadcasts and Foreign Press

1. The representative of this Office who attended the meeting of 5 November on "Exploiting of Foreign Press and Periodicals" has given me a report of the meeting and a copy of the report from the Director of the FBIS to the Assistant Director, Office of Operations, commenting on possible expansion in FBIS services. It is my understanding that you wish from ORE a statement of the ORE attitude with respect to the suggested expansion of FBIS and the exploitation of foreign press and periodicals.

2. FBIS. ORE desires from FBIS transcripts or résumés of foreign radio broadcasts along selective lines, but does not require analyses of such broadcasts. Comments by FBIS, arising out of its technical or specialized knowledge of foreign broadcasts, (on matters such as transmitter characteristics, the role of different commentators, variations in broadcasts by beams), which would assist ORE in interpreting the transcripts, will be gratefully received. As for analyses of propaganda lines and trends and the like, it is believed that ORE should provide them, and that if additional personnel are necessary for this purpose, they should be under the direction of ORE.

3. Foreign Press and Periodicals. ORE is well aware of the value of materials in the foreign press and periodicals as a fruitful source of intelligence information, and the ORE representative at the meeting stated ORE opinion that exploitation of these materials is desirable. In view, however, of the very considerable review of the foreign press which is now carried on by representatives of various departments at our foreign missions, and of the large amount of reporting which is already based on such review, ORE feels that the proposals should be brought to a more concrete stage before their utility can be fully studied. In their present form there would appear to be a risk of duplication of effort, which should be eliminated before a project of such an ambitious nature and involving such large expense can be approved.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

- 2 -

4. It is recommended that a special study be made of the exploitation of Russian publications. Because of the difficulty of getting information from other sources, it may be that a special exploitation of press and periodicals in the USSR would bring greater returns than is likely to be the case with other countries.

J. KLAHR HUDDLE
Assistant Director
Reports and Estimates

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